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NIXON ASKED TO TESTIFY ABOUT CIA MAIL SPYING Operation Code-Named 'HT Lingual'

WASHINGTON — (UPI)

The Senate Intelligence Committee wants to question former President Richard Nixon about a CIA program of opening and copying foreign mail to U.S. citizens, even including one letter to Nixon.

Other Americans and groups whose mail was reported opened by intelligence agencies are highly upset about it.

The decision to ask Nixon to testify on this and other matters was announced Wednesday by Chairman Frank Church, D-Idaho.

James Angleton, former CIA chief of counterintelligence, told the committee intelligence agencies illegally opened private mail over a period of 20 years.

The victims, according to Angleton's testimony and statements by Church, included Nobel Peace Prize winners Linus Pauling and Martin Luther King Jr., Church and other senators, Nixon himself, the Ford and Rockefeller foundations and Harvard University.

Church said the intelligence operation, code-named "HT Lingual," intercepted a letter to Nixon in June, 1968 — when he was campaigning for president — from his speechwriter, Ray Price, who was traveling in the Soviet Union.

Church said a letter he himself wrote to his mother-in-law while on a trip to the

Soviet Union was opened and photographed.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., one of the identified victims, called it extremely unfortunate. Another, Hubert H. Humphrey, Minn., called it an outrage.

Charles Daly, a Harvard vice president, said: "We are sickened by reports of this and other criminal actions taken by persons who are supposed to be busy defending our rights instead of stealing them."

Coretta King, widow of Martin Luther King Jr., said, "Suspicions over the years that the CIA was unlawfully intruding into domestic affairs and citizens' privacy have been confirmed."

The committee is not the only one that wants to question Nixon.

U.S. District Judge Lewis Smith Wednesday ordered him to submit sworn depositions in former aide Morton H. Halperin's damage suit charging the Nixon administration with illegally tapping his home phone.

During Wednesday's committee hearing, panel member Walter F. Mondale, D-Minn., read from a White House document describing a June 5, 1970, meeting in which Nixon instructed the nation's intelligence chiefs to expand surveillance of Americans, particularly students, to determine the extent of any foreign influence on them.